SALES & MARKETING MANAGEMENT

JULY 1990
A BILL PUBLICATION
FOUR DOLLARS

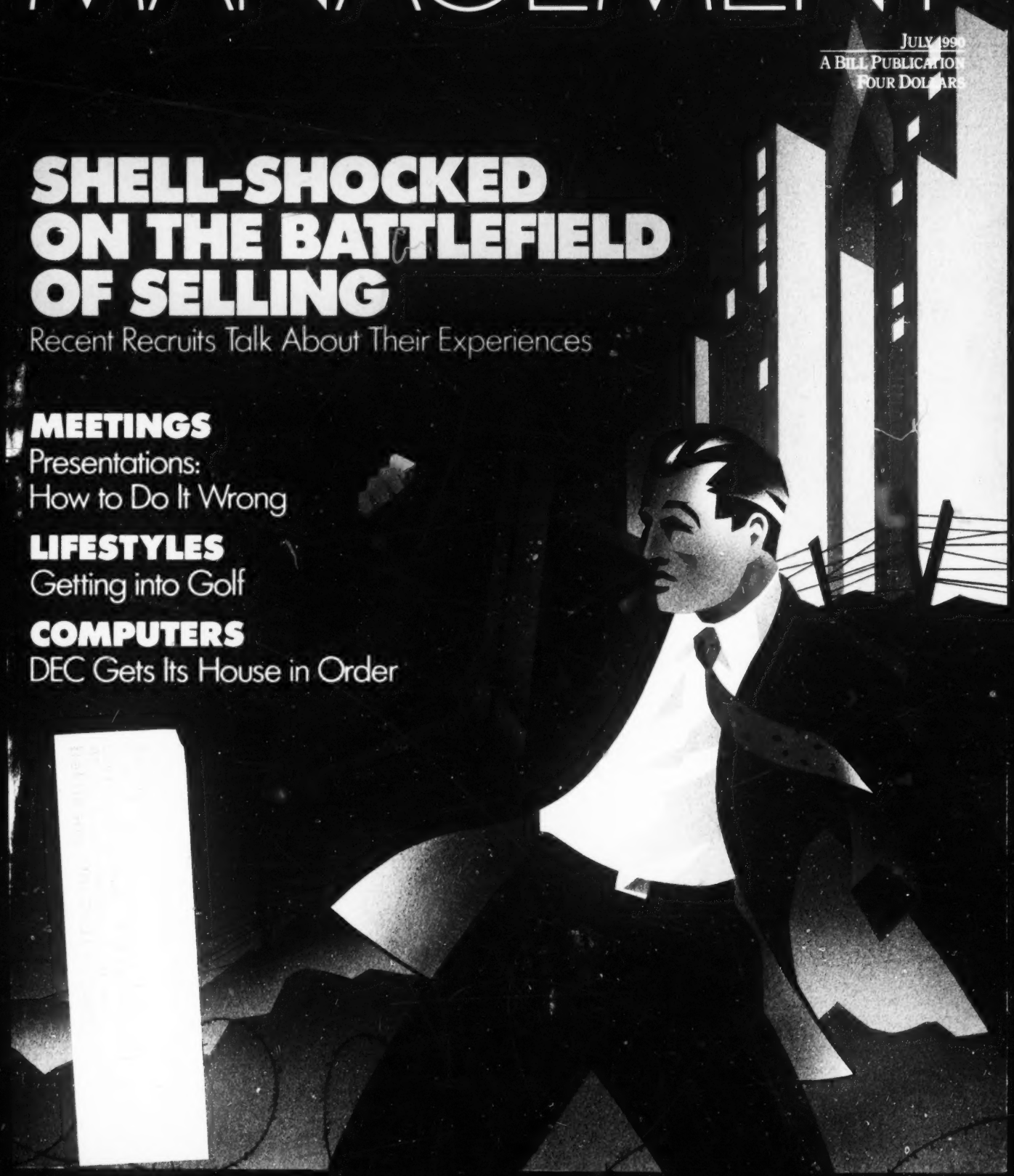
SHELL-SHOCKED ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF SELLING

Recent Recruits Talk About Their Experiences

MEETINGS
Presentations:
How to Do It Wrong

LIFESTYLES
Getting into Golf

COMPUTERS
DEC Gets Its House in Order



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SALES & MARKETING MANAGEMENT

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COVER ILLUSTRATION BY DANIEL PELAVIN

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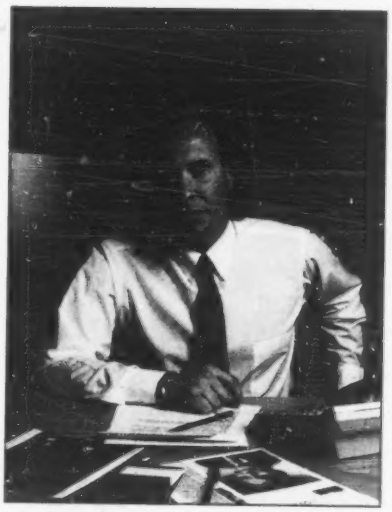
ABP

THE RACE

THE POSSIBLE DREAM



Having successfully avoided the issue for two months now, it seems the time has finally come for me to explain myself.

Why "The Race"? Well, let's just say that it's kind of an all-encompassing term, a word that in one way or another describes what we do, who we are, and what motivates us. There's the race to the finish; the race to be No. 1; the rat race; the race to succeed; the race against the clock; and, of course, the human race itself. We get up in the morning, race to work, race around all day from appointment to appointment, race back to the office for a meeting or two, race home to dinner, and then race off to bed—hoping to get in a few hours sleep before we get up and begin the race all over again.

Unfortunately, all this racing around doesn't leave a whole lot of time for relaxation, since most of us use whatever precious hours are left to run off to the supermarket or the hardware store (where we naturally race up and down the aisles), or perhaps to the gym, where we race around a running track or climb onto a treadmill that allows us the ironic luxury of racing against ourselves. And if you have children, the race is also run at the mall, the movies, the beach, McDonald's, Burger King, and all the other places kids spend their time, which leaves us wishing there were more hours in the day so we could sit down and watch that videotape of last week's episode of *The Simpsons*, regularly punching the fast-forward button in order to race through those tiresome commercials, of course.

As for newspapers, magazines, and other printed material—who has time? At the office, the dozen or so publications that cross any given desk in any given week are raced through so furiously it's a wonder that we're able to digest any of them at all. What's needed, it seems, is a one-stop source; a place where we can come in for a quick pit stop, load up on all the necessary information relevant to our jobs, and then get back into the race all fueled up and ready to go. Sound like a dream? Sure it does. But there's nothing wrong with dreaming.

Our dream, for example, goes something like this: We gather together some of the top minds in sales and marketing, mix in a healthy dose of expert writing and opinion, come up with a list of topics that have broad-based appeal and application, and then lay it all out in an easy-to-digest format complete with eye-catching graphics and illustrations. In and around all this we weave ads from companies that target their goods and services to our readers, and to top it all off we come up with a name that tells them exactly who this product is aimed at, something like *Sales & Marketing Management*, for instance.

It's a recurring dream, one we seem to have almost every day. What does it mean? Beats us. But it must have some significance, since everyone around here keeps having it. Actually, we're thinking about seeing an expert about it, in the hope some light can be shed on this rather bizarre phenomenon. The only problem is, we're so busy racing around trying to put out a magazine we don't have time.

management will always have is 'lack of time,' which will not allow them the luxury to sit at a terminal and deal with their information needs. It still remains primarily the work of staff members to access and decipher the necessary information."

She adds, however, that "sophisticated tools will eventually allow the rapid access and response of computer systems to management's questions. Specifically, these are tools with 'artificial intelligence' built into them. These tools look not only for positive or negative trends but also for causes of trends. This type of tool has selective problem-solving ability with logic built into it and quickly points out problems to management." But, as she points out, "We're not there yet."

Because of the rapid pace of technological change and the remarkable ability of computer users to find new ways to benefit from their electronic tools, marketers will find it dangerous to stand in place and remain content with their current automation tools and skills. As Stanat stresses: "The databases and tools must be viewed as evolutionary and will constantly be changing as the business changes and the user finds the best ways to use the tools. Therefore, management must fund not only new development efforts but also any upgrading needed to cope with the changing dynamics of the business. Otherwise, all of the tools become obsolete."

Unfortunately, Stanat doesn't address one of the most critical issues information technology poses for both the marketing and sales department. Namely, how the differences between them will be blurred and their relative roles reevaluated. As salespeople take over some of marketing's information-gathering activities, and as sales and marketing functions become more closely integrated in order to exploit the new technologies, it will become more and more parochial to view a marketing information system *or* a sales information system in isolation.

YESTERDAY'S FLASH, TODAY'S FIZZLE?

PC software buyers are creatures of habit. Or so it seems when you look at the Software Publishers Assn.'s (SPA) annual report on 1989 industry sales.

While total software shipments rose only 12% to $3.1 billion, word processors and spreadsheets—which jumpstarted PC sales in the early 1980s—continued to post robust gains of 37% and 29%, respectively.

PC Software Sales: Winners and Losers

Type of Program	1989 Sales ($ Mil.)	% Change 1988-89
Word processing	$654.6	+ 37.4%
Spreadsheets	543.1	+ 29.0
Other productivity	493.9	+ 21.9
Graphics	366.0	+ 12.1
Recreation	288.4	– 11.6
Databases	288.0	– 6.2
Integrated	133.3	+ 7.3
Education	128.0	– 4.3
Desktop publishing	114.7	– 19.6
Languages/tools	88.7	– 14.5
TOTAL	$3,098.8	+ 11.9%

SOURCE: Software Publishers Assn.

But the biggest surprise in this year's SPA report was the plunge recorded by desktop publishing software, down 20% to $114.7 million. Three years ago, desktop was the industry's hottest buzzword, and sales managers everywhere were being told that with a PC and the appropriate software they could design and publish their own newsletters, product brochures, promotional literature, etc.

SPA research director Ann Stephens downplays the 20% drop-off, noting that sales of desktop publishing software more than doubled in 1988. "Several new sophisticated desktop publishing programs are expected to appear this year," she says, "and it's likely that last year buyers decided to wait and see. That often happens when it's known that a new software upgrade is on the way." □

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